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Washington Meeting on Folk Art Offers Forum for Varied Points of View

December Meeting Sponsored by Folklife Center

"Context" may have been the most often used word during the two-day Washington Meeting on Folk Art held at the Library of Congress on December 5 and 6. An ongoing theme of the meeting was that to appreciate fully the artistic and cultural significance of an object, one must consider the circumstances under which it was made—when, where, by whom, and for what purpose.

The dramatic southwest curtain of the Jefferson Building, long closed to the public before the opening of the Madison Building, was open to view as the site of the second day of the Washington Conference on Folk Art.

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The consideration of context is equally valuable for understanding an event such as a meeting on folk art. The Washington meeting came six years after another meeting on folk art held at the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum in November 1977. At that conference, art historians, folklorists, collectors, and anthropologists voiced disparate, often contentious opinions in an atmosphere that became electrically charged. "Participants readily took sides and clustered with their ideological peers, almost as if at a political rally," said Scott T. Swank in his introduction to *Perspectives on American Folk Art,* which grew out of the Winterthur meeting.

By the end of the Washington conference, however, Robert Bishop, director of the Museum of American Folk Art, was able to offer this final assessment: "Since the Winterthur conference in 1977, there really have been some major realignments on what appear to be the two sides of the trenches. Certainly the people involved with the folklore world have in some ways softened their positions; and the people on the other side—the folk art collectors, the folk art historians—have come to see that some of the ideas presented at that conference by the folklorists did indeed have great merit and value, and they have incorporated those particular ideas into their own thinking about this field."

From its inception, the Washington Meeting on Folk Art, heir to Winterthur's theme, participants, and controversy, was structured by the Museum of American Folk Art in New York City and the Library's American Folklife Center as a forum for reconsideration. For months before the meeting, center staff coordinator Peter T. Bartis and others had made every effort to anticipate and satisfy the needs and concerns of everyone involved, panelists and audience alike, to ensure that everything would go smoothly. The enthusiastic, nationwide response to the meeting—

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Comparable institutions and organizations in other countries may arrange to receive the *Bulletin* on the exchange basis by applying in writing to the Library's Exchange and Gift Division. All other correspondence should be addressed to the LC *Information Bulletin,* Information Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540.

Raye Virginia Allen, Alan Jabbour, and Robert Bishop

approximately 400 people from all parts of the country in attendance—demonstrated that it was indeed time for such a conference.

The first day's opening remarks, reiterated as the meeting progressed, invoked an image of the proceedings as a polite exchange of ideas. "I am confident we will achieve a dialogue between friends," said center board member Raye Virginia Allen in her welcoming remarks on behalf of the Board of Trustees. Folklife Center director Alan Jabbour further defined the nature of the proceedings envisioned by the meeting's hosts: "Our conversations can help all of us to deepen our perspective, and if we are wise we shall continue the conversations beyond these walls. Our sense of urgency, our sense that much is at stake, must not make us impatient; rather, we must school ourselves to listen and share, to contribute and reflect, for the sake of the art we espouse."

From there, the meeting proceeded to consider questions of definition, the history of folk art collecting, the nature of creativity in relationship to folk artists, and the beneficial and destructive features of the marketplace. The atmosphere was cautious, and panel presentations and comments from the audience seemed restrained. The cumulative effect of this atmosphere was summed up by Dean Failey of Christie's International Ltd. during the final panel discussion. He said the conference reminded him of the George Booth cartoon in the November 28, 1983, issue of the *New Yorker.* Through the open door is a slightly wild looking fellow sitting in his bathtub declaiming, "Like a duck. Calm and placid on the surface. . . ."

There were differences of opinion expressed by the conference participants, on the matter of definition, for example. In his paper " 'Properly Speaking': The

Eugene Metcalf, Alan Jabbour, Michael Owen Jones of the University of California, and John Vlach

Need for Plain Talk About Folk Art," folklorist John Vlach of George Washington University argued the urgency of clarifying terms and concepts—for more precise application of terminology in the field:

"Folk art for public consumption is generally folk art by fiat—declared to be so, it is so. Thinking and reasoning are suspended, so that items as distinctly different as quilts from Alabama, cast iron stove panels from Philadelphia, samplers from young ladies' seminaries from Massachusetts, furniture made by Shakers in New York, and yard art made by a hermit from Iowa are all called the same thing and consequently are considered to be generally equivalent to one another. The anything-goes, free-for-all approach that engenders this kind of lumping cannot be allowed to persist."

His view was directly opposed by collector Herbert W. Hemphill, Jr., coauthor of *Twentieth-Century American Folk Art and Artists,* who wanted to get on with the activities at hand: "It seems a waste of time to backtrack into semantics while the art can disappear, undocumented and unappreciated."

The beneficent role of the collector was alternately asserted and disputed. Louis C. Jones, director emeritus of the New York State Historical Association Farmers' Museum, recounted the history of the collection and exhibition of folk art by such luminaries as Holger Cahill, Edith Halpert, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Electra Havemeyer Webb. The current appreciation of American folk art, Mr. Jones said, can be traced largely to the pioneering work of those early collectors, enlightened dealers, and the museums with which they worked. Eugene Metcalf from Miami University took issue with that. He argued that the early collectors distorted the public's view of folk art by applying the aesthetic criteria derived from high art to its collection and appreciation.

Herbert Hemphill

Louis C. Jones

Folklorist Suzi Jones from the Alaska Council on the Arts discussed the negative effects that collecting can have on traditional communities. In her paper, "Creators of Art, Inhibitors of Belief," she noted that, when outsiders reduce native American ritual objects to the status of valuable art, the resulting market pressures can be highly disruptive to traditional cultures. Drawing on her experience with Ohio folk artists, Rosemary Joyce voiced her concern that the craft market is accelerating the normal, wholesome evolution of traditional styles to an alarming degree. "What we have is change run amok," she said.

Participants also disagreed about whether the term "folk art" actually masks an economic or social judgment. The question of whether "bad art" deserves con-

Henry Glassie, Michael Durham, and Dean Failey

■ Folk art, whatever else it means to all of us, seems as a term to possess a strong and persistent democratic strain . . . homemade and grassroots in origin. . . .

■ We approach the subject through the channels and with the blinders of our particular circles and networks of devotees . . . vaguely aware of other networks approaching the subject of folk art, but uninformed about and suspicious of these other interlopers. . . .

■ We seem to hover helplessly between thinking of folk art as a form of individual creativity, and thinking of it as a collective cultural expression. It is a good rule of thumb in all art that, the closer we are to it culturally, the more we focus on it as individual creation. . . .

■ We similarly hover between a psychic desire to identify with this folk art we love, and a sort of anthropological detachment and dispassionate regard for it as an interesting but fundamentally **other** artistic achievement. . . .

■ When we think of the word "folk," we all seem to sense a collective dimension. But some of us define collectivity in terms of small, homogeneous communities. Others seem to have in mind something like regional or ethnic identification. Yet others seem to use the word to evoke elements of national identity. . . .

■ We badly need to add an international dimension to our reflections on folk art. The exhibition, "Precious Legacy," depicting the cultural legacy of the Jews of Prague up until World War II, is a case in point. . . .

■ We need to understand better the way folk art intersects and interacts with the marketplace. Some of us seem to worship at the shrine of the marketplace, while some of us fear and despise it. . . .

■ We seem to be showing a growing awareness of and interest in the makers of folk art themselves as artists and as people. Such a trend is most welcome for several reasons. . . .

—Excerpts of opening remarks by center director Alan Jabbour

Suzi Jones and Lonn Taylor of the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe

Kenneth Ames of the Winterthur Museum and Wilcomb Washburn of the Smithsonian

Herbert Hemphill, Robert Bishop, and Peter Bartis

sideration as well, or indeed exactly what constitutes bad art, was not resolved. The challenging suggestion that the manager of a shipyard welding crew could be considered a folk artist was not taken up, although it seemed potentially quite controversial.

After two days of meetings during which there were opposing views expressed about many of the points made and no apparent consensus was reached, *Americana* editor Michael Durham summed up what many conference participants may have felt. He said that he had come to the meeting hoping that the experts would tell him what to think, but had concluded, "When it comes to folk art, I guess I'm really going to have to learn to think for myself."

The Washington meeting did, however, lead to increased dialogue among persons representing differing viewpoints, the purpose for which it was intended. During the meeting's concluding session of commentary and discussion, Alan Jabbour remarked that the meeting had been an opportunity to assess where we have been and where we are going. Folklorist Henry Glassie from the University of Pennsylvania said that he felt hopeful about the fact that there no longer appeared to be a stereotypic division of opinion between the social scientists and collectors participating in the meeting. If there was a new line of division, he

STAFF NEWS

Sherlock Searcher Climbs his Family Tree

Uncle Sherlock has decided to do a little genealogical research, but his trusty sidekick, Peek-a-Boo, doesn't quite have the hang of it yet. They are stumped, barking up the wrong tree in their unflagging quest for the books listed here, missing from the shelves and not charged in the Central Charge File. Can anyone help him?

Sherlock avunculates in Alcove 7, Main Reading Room, or can be reached on ext. 77427, Collections Management Division, where one of his little nieces or nephews can convey a message to him. Who knows, he might even discover that you and he are related! Wouldn't *that* just make your day?

- American Genealogical Research Institute
  How to Trace Your Family Tree: A Complete and Easy Guide for the Beginner. 1973. CS16.A48 1973

- Aubrey, Philip
  A Growing Tree: A History of the Hoffmeister Family of Portsmouth and Cowes, 1781–1918. 1977. CS439.H58 1977

- Blakelock, Mildred P.
  Your Family History: How to Trace and Record It. 1931. CS16.B5

- Brisack, Allen G.
  Descendants of Daniel Brisack and His Wife Catharine Lamb. 1974. CS71.B86117

- Grant, Howard Brooke
  Joseph Corder. 1936. CS71.C794 1936

- Hack, Christopher Amory
  William Hack and His Descendants. 1894. CS71.H118 1894

- Hilton, Suzanne
  Who Do You Think You Are? Digging For Your Family Roots. 1976. CS16.H54

- Jones, Franklin La Follette
  History of the La Follette Family in America (Revised). 1972. CS71.L18 1972

- Porter, Arthur Amasa
  John Porter and His Descendants. 1917. CS71.P839 1917

- Tuttle, Emmett George
  Family Record of Calvin Tuttle and His Wife Ruth Ann Miner. 1872. CS71.T967 1871

John W. McElroy Dies
Former Head of Manuscript Preparation

Rear Adm. John W. McElroy of Milton, Mass., died at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Brockton, Mass., on December 8. He was 84 years old. Funeral services were held at the Fort Myer Chapel, Arlington, Va., on December 13, followed by burial with full military honors in the Arlington National Cemetery. He is survived by his wife Alice (Treacy) and several nieces and nephews.

Jack, or the Admiral as he was known to his colleagues in the Library and many friends everywhere, came to the Manuscript Division after a long, interesting, and distinguished career. He served with the U.S. Navy as an enlisted man during World War I, received a master's degree from Harvard University in 1933, and, in 1939–40, was master of the flagship *Capitana* of the Harvard Columbus Expedition, led by his lifelong friend, Samuel Eliot Morison. Among the

many important results of that expedition was Admiral McElroy's article, "The Ocean Navigation of Columbus on his First Voyage," published in the July 1941 issue of the *American Neptune*. Jack McElroy not only was a contributor to *American Neptune*, but also was a member of that journal's Editorial Advisory Board from the time of its first issue in January 1941 until his death.

Returning to naval service as an officer in 1940, he had duty assignments during World War II that took him to the South Pacific, Aleutians, Mediterranean, and the North and South Atlantic. Following the war, he served in Washington, D.C., as director (pro tem) of naval history. He was given command of the hospital ship *Consolation* during the Korean War. Refitted with a helicopter landing platform, the *Consolation* arrived off Pusan in October 1951 and was the first hospital ship to receive casualties by helicopter direct from the battlefield.

Admiral McElroy retired from the Navy in 1961 and came to the Library's Manuscript Division in October 1963 as head of the Preparation Section. In addition to previous experience in the 1930s as regional director of the Survey of Federal Archives and supervisor of the National Archives' project in Massachusetts, he brought to his work an energetic nature, an enlivening spirit, an Irish wit, and a fund of anecdotes and legendary yarns. He left the Manuscript Division in August 1964, but returned in September 1965 to take on the special assignment of arranging and describing the rich collections that constitute the Naval Historical Foundation Collection, considered to be the largest body of personal papers in a single repository relating to American naval history. He resigned from the Library in March 1967.

[*John McDonough*]

Library Hours for February 20

In accordance with the provisions of the law, the Library will observe Washington's birthday as a holiday on Monday, February 20. Reading rooms that maintain holiday hours will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Study facility areas will be open and the Serial Record Division and the Loan Division will provide telephone reference service from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. All other divisions of the Library will be closed.

The principal exhibit halls in the Library's Jefferson and Madison Buildings will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on February 20.

Edward L. Dodson Receives 20-Year Federal Service Pin

Edward L. Dodson, a catalog filer in the Filing Section, Catalog Management and Publication Division, was presented a 20-year Federal Service Award pin on January 25 by Gloria H. Hsia, chief of the division. Also present were Patricia Hines, assistant chief for catalog management; Ralph Weddington, head of the Filing Section; and Juanita Hines, supervisor of the Main Catalog Filing Unit.

A native of Washington, D.C., and a graduate of McKinley High School, Mr. Dodson began his Library service in January 1964, following employment with Georgetown University. During his tenure at the Library, Mr. Dodson has received subsequent promotions to more responsible positions, serving in the Subject Cataloging Division, the former Catalog Maintenance and Publication Division, the former Catalog Management Division, and now the Catalog Management and Publication Division.

March-April Training Courses

The Staff Training and Development Office is offering the following courses starting in March and April. Several of these have nomination deadlines within the next four weeks.

Course Title	*Dates*	*Nomination Deadline*
Legal Research	3/7-5/23	2/17
Affirmative Action Seminar 102	3/12	N/A
ADP at LC	3/13-29	3/5
Fundamentals of Library Supervision	3/19-22	3/5
EEO at LC	3/21-22	3/7
Health Assistance Program	3/27	3/13
New Staff Organization	3/28	N/A
Stress Management	3/29-30	3/1
Basic English Grammar	4/2-6/8	3/17
Report Writing	4/3-5	3/9
Completed Staff Work, Dollarizing, Problem Solving, and Communication Skills	4/9-10	3/9
Career Development Workshop	4/11	N/A
Affirmative Action Seminar 102	4/12	N/A

Credit Union Posts 8% Dividend
Assets Reach Record $10 Million Mark

The Board of Directors of the Library of Congress Credit Union has announced an eight percent (seven percent regular and one special) dividend on all share accounts for the quarter ending December 31, 1983. Dividends of $120,151 were credited to members' accounts on January 1. The board also announced a dividend of 11½ percent on Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) for the period ending December 31. More than $46,590 was posted to members' IRA accounts on January 1.

At the close of the year, the Credit Union's year-end assets exceeded $10 million for the first time in its 49-year history, and its annual income for the first time exceeded $1 million. The Credit Union reached the $1 million asset size in 1965. In 1978, its assets reached $5 million.

More than 4,540 present and former Library of Congress employees are members of the Credit Union. There are nearly 1,975 outstanding loans to members totaling $7.4 million. Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) total 602 and represent $1.7 million in deposits. More than 450 Credit Union members have share draft accounts.

Credit Union membership is open to all Library employees. The office is located in room 634 of the Madison Building. Office hours are 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays and 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on paydays.

Staff Activities

Participants in the 52nd Institute in Modern Archives Administration, meeting in Washington, spent January 17 at the Library of Congress in a program organized by the Manuscript Division. The Institute is administered by the National Archives and Records Service, in cooperation with the Library of Congress. Some 45 archivists and curators participated in the 52nd Institute, which was directed by Maygene Daniels of the National Archives.

Assistant Librarian for Research Services **John C. Broderick** greeted the group during the morning session. Manuscript Division staff members who addressed the gathering and their topics included **James H. Hutson,** chief, who welcomed the group and spoke on "History and Background of the Division, Acquisitions Policies and Procedures"; **John D. Knowlton,** head, Preparation Section, on "Organization, Description, Preservation, and Handling of Manuscript Collections"; **Steven Hensen,** senior manuscript cataloger, on the division's "Cataloging and Use of Automatic Data Processing Procedures for Manuscript Control"; and **John McDonough,** manuscript historian, on "Reference and Reader Service." Alan Virta, senior manuscript cataloger in the Manuscripts Section, Special Materials Cataloging Division, discussed the work of that section. The day concluded with tours of the Manuscript Division.

Ranjan Borra of the Library's Asian Division organized the 14th annual conference of Subhas Society, honoring Indian nationalist leader Subhas Chandra Bose, held in December at American University. **Kersi Shroff** of the Library's American-British Law Division delivered an account of criminal trials held in London for political offenses committed in England for India's freedom entitled "Political Assassination: The First Stab of Indian Nationalism." **David Lockwood** of the Library's Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division was a discussant during a panel on "Challenges of Contemporary Nationalism." Ranjan Mathai of the Embassy of India delivered the inaugural speech opening the conference. Other speakers came from various local institutions and as far away as the University of London.

George E. Glos, assistant chief of the European Law Division, delivered two lectures in November to students in the Department of Government at George Washington University. Dr. Glos spoke on the act of state doctrine and on Soviet law.

Robert Saudek, chief of the Library's Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division, was invited to take part in the 1984 Patricia Wise Lecture, delivered by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., on February 8. Mr. Saudek introduced the speaker. The Wise lecture series, offered by the American Film Institute, serves as a means of focusing public attention on the moving image and its relation to culture, society, and technology.

Ivan Sipkov, chief of the European Law Division, has accepted an invitation to join the editorial board of a new journal, the *World Commercial Law Reporter,* which will be issued under the auspices of West Publishing Co.

Personnel Changes

Appointments: Sibyl Cole, clerical assistant, GS-4, Cop Reg, 30845; Joseph Garvey, clerk-typist, GS-4, P&S, 30939.

Temporary Appointment: Gayle Shura, nurse, GS-9, Health, NP.

Reappointment: Lydia Shahid, descriptive cataloger, GS-9, Desc Cat, 30662.

Promotion: Wayne Morrison, to library technician, GS-6, CRS E, 30802.

Resignations: Dennis Crossland, ASO; Dolores Darr, Photodup; Donita Johnson, Cop Acq & Proc; Mark McKnight, Photodup; Bridgette Marshall, CRS C; Keith Paige, Col Mgmt; Terra Sutton, GRR; Johanna Swart, Desc Cat.

Birth Announcement

Mi Chu and Thomas Burnett Wiens are the parents of a daughter, Laura Helen, born on October 3 at the Columbia Hospital for Women. Mrs. Wiens is an area specialist in the Chinese and Korean Section, Asian Division, and Mr. Wiens is a senior economist at the World Bank.

Late February Events

Tuesday, February 21

The seventh Health Forum in a series sponsored by the Library's Health Services Office will hear Dr. David Johnson discuss "Avoiding Sports Injuries." In the Mary Pickford Theater, LM 302, at 10 a.m.

The American Red Cross Bloodmobile Unit will be at the Library on Tuesday, February 21, and Wednesday, February 22. In the Mumford Room, LM 649, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The LCPA Special Interest Group meeting will focus on the special collections in the Library. Pat Loughney of the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division will speak on the Thomas Edison Film Company at the Pan American Exposition of 1901. In the Processing Services Large Conference Room, LM 642, at 12:10 p.m.

Thursday and Friday, February 23 and 24

The Beaux Arts Trio will perform Beethoven's Variations in G Major on "Ich bin der Schneider Kakudu," Op. 121a; Shostakovich's Trio in E minor, Op. 67; and Mendelssohn's Trio in D minor, Op. 49. Tickets will be distributed by the Washington Performing Arts Society box office beginning February 20. In the Coolidge Auditorium at 8 p.m.

Monday, February 27

Amy Clampitt and Robert Pinsky will read from their poems. Ms. Clampitt's latest work is *The Kingfisher* (1983). Mr. Pinsky is poetry editor of the *New Republic*. His third book of poetry, *History of My Heart*, will be published this month. No tickets are required. In the Coolidge Auditorium at 8 p.m.

Tuesday, February 28

The LCPA Special Interest Group on American Studies will hear Dave Myers of the General Reading Rooms Division present a talk on Samuel Gompers, the American labor leader. In the Processing Services Large Conference Room, LM 642, at 12:10 p.m.

Beaux Arts Trio

suggested, it might be between those seeking to reduce the content of what is studied and those who do not seek to reduce it. Dean Failey added that with each meeting on the topic of folk art, he senses that people are taking small steps closer together.

[*Brett Topping*]

Library Notes

The Library's Photoduplication Service was the subject of an eight-page article in the December issue of *Technical Photography*. The article addresses the technical operations of the Photoduplication Service and provides information on the various subject matters and formats which the service handles.

The following was recently included among Letters to the Editor to the *Writer:*

The first typewriter I ever owned was an old Oliver. I bought it at a Salvation Army store for two dollars, and it was so heavy I could hardly handle it. I had a story to write, so I wrote it, and mailed it to a magazine in New York City. Within a few days I received a telegram informing me that the story had been accepted and a fat check was enclosed. That was about half a century ago, and I am now eighty-six years old.

After many years of not writing, I was revived by the *Writer*. I lost my eyesight in 1967, but when I discovered the *Writer* was available on "Talking Books,"* I almost swooned. Through "Talking Books" I receive a fat folder bimonthly, with a list of available "Talking Books" on hard records, cassette tapes, and "Flexies." The record player and the cassette player are loaned, and repairs if needed are free. I am now writing a book about the volunteer work I have been doing for the Committee on Housing for the Elderly in El Cerrito, California.

*For more information about Talking Books, contact The Library of Congress, Division [National Library Service] for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Washington, D.C. 20542. Talking-book record players and cassette players are available free on permanent loan through the Regional Libraries of the Library of Congress. Professional certification of handicap is required. — *Ed.*

Donald J. Raleigh of the History Department, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822, would appreciate information from anyone who personally knew, or who has any materials relating to Alexis V. Babine (1866–1930), whose unpublished diary is in the collections of the Library's Manuscript Division. Mr. Raleigh intends to publish this diary. Babine was a Russian-born American who negotiated the purchase of the Library's Yudin Collection. He later spent four years (1917–21) in the Russian city of Saratov, located on the Volga River. During his stay in Saratov, Babine kept a diary that chronicles the Civil War in that provincial town.

Upcoming Beaux Arts Trio Concerts

February 23–24

Beethoven: Variations in G major on "Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu," Op. 121a
Shostakovich: Trio in E minor, Op. 67
Mendelssohn: Trio in D minor, Op. 49

March 1–2

Haydn: Trio in D minor, H.XV:23
Beethoven: Trio in D major, Op. 70, No. 1 ("Ghost")
Schubert: Trio in E-flat major, Op. 100

Tickets for these concerts will be distributed at the Washington Performing Arts box office at 1330 G St. N.W. (Jordan-Kitt's), beginning at 8:30 a.m. on the Monday before each pair of concerts. Two tickets will be distributed to an individual, with a 25-cent service charge on each ticket. Phone orders may be placed by calling 393–4463. Mail orders are not accepted.

New Publications of Note

Two 1983 publications recently received from ASLIB of interest to librarians are *Computerized Systems in Library and Information Services* (not yet in LC), edited by H. L. Williams, and *Online Bibliographic Databases* (Z699.22.H34 1983), third edition, by James L. Hall and Marjorie J. Brown. The former is a paperbound, 76-page booklet giving the five papers which constitute the proceedings of a conference of the ASLIB Biological and Agricultural Science Group held in June 1982. The latter is a more substantial work of 383 pages reporting on 179 data bases with illustrations and costs. The general introductory data and particularly the bibliography, address list, and indexes will be useful.

[*F. E. Croxton*]

The Library has received *Czech Prose: An Anthology*, translated and edited by William E. Harkins of Columbia University. Published in 1983 by the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures of the University of Michigan, this anthology is a companion piece to Alfred French's *Anthology of Czech Poetry* (1973). Mr. Harkins' anthology covers and illustrates the development of Czech prose from the beginnings in

the 14th century to the foundation of the First Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. The selection and biographical notes make this volume a useful reference work. The anthology is being processed and will be made available to readers in the European Reading Room. [*George J. Kovtun*]

Assistance in selecting or recommending a style manual is available in a recently published monograph entitled *Style Manuals of the English-Speaking World: A Guide* (Phoenix, Ariz., Oryx Press, 1983. Z165.H68). Descriptions of general manuals are followed by a list of subject manuals ranging from agriculture to zoology. The entry for each guide includes an explanation of its arrangement and comparative notes on the bibliographic style advocated by each. In many cases, comments on peculiar characteristics and strong and weak points of a particular manual are added. [*Marguerite Bloxom*]

News in the Library World

MLA Holds Centennial Convention

The Modern Language Association, founded in 1883, held its centennial convention in New York City on December 27–30. Approximately 10,000 persons attended the convention. The anniversary was commemorated by an opening Centennial Forum in which notable scholars assessed the study and teaching of literature, writing, and foreign languages, concluding with a summary view by Northrop Frye entitled "Literary and Linguistic Scholarship in a Post Literate World." [Mr. Frye will lecture on "The Social Authority of the Writer" at the Library of Congress on April 24.]

By noon Friday, December 30, some 700 sessions had been held, covering a wide range of subject matter: children's and adolescent literature, computer-assisted instruction and research, drama, film and television, folklore, literary theory and criticism, literary relations, nonfictional prose, poetry, popular culture, prose fiction, rhetoric and rhetorical theory, science and the humanities, themes and archetypes, translation, comparative literature, linguistics, the teaching of language and literature, research and bibliography, publishing and editing, African literatures, American literatures, Asian literatures, British literature, French literature, German literatures, Spanish literatures, and others (Hungarian, Yiddish, Scandinavian, and so forth).

The Presidential Address was delivered by Mary Ann Caws of Hunter College, City University of New York. The 1984 MLA president is Carolyn Heilbrun of Columbia University.

The James Russell Lowell prize for an outstanding book by a member of the association went to Thomas Greene for his *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven, 1982). The William Riley Parker prize for an outstanding article in the association's journal, *PMLA*, went to Paul B. Armstrong for an article on "the limits of pluralism." The Mina P. Shaughnessy Medal for an outstanding research publication in the field of teaching English language and literature went to Marie Pousot and Rosemary Deen for their *Beat Not the Poor Desk: Writing: What to Teach, How to Teach It, and Why* (Montclair, 1982).

The American Literature Section presented its Jay B. Hubbell medallion to R. W. B. Lewis, Yale University, for his contributions to the study of American literature.

The 1984 MLA convention will be held in Washington, D.C., on December 27–30, the first meeting in Washington since the 1950s. [*John C. Broderick*]

Institute on Federal Library Resources Planned

The 12th annual Institute on Federal Library Resources, sponsored by the School of Library and Information Science, The Catholic University of America, will be held in Washington, D.C., on July 23–August 3.

Frank Kurt Cylke, the academic director, has announced that the carefully planned curriculum will identify the role of the libraries, information centers, and data banks in the Federal library community; discuss the implication of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science's posture as related to Federal libraries; identify resources, publications, and specialized services provided by Federal libraries; identify resources available through major Government clearinghouses, such as National Technical Information Service (NTIS), Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), and Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC); compare the in-operation or the in-process development of the major Federal library and information services; discuss the implications for libraries of the existing satellite technology; and identify and articulate the functions performed by the Federal Library Committee.

Participants will be addressed by 25 directors of Federal information programs and several membership association representatives.

Information regarding the Institute may be obtained by contacting The School of Library and Information Science, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. 20064.

FLRT Solicits Members

The Federal Librarians Round Table (FLRT) of ALA is soliciting new members. FLRT is the only pro-

fessional organization open to all Government librarians which addresses issues facing the Federal library work force. Membership ($6 a year for ALA members) includes a subscription to the *Federal Librarian.* This publication includes the latest news from Washington, D.C., and offers the opportunity to join with colleagues to confront issues of lasting significance to the library and information science community. For more information, interested librarians should contact the American Library Association, Membership Services, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

NAL Resumes CONSER Participation

The National Agricultural Library (NAL) is resuming a national role in the processing of current agricultural serials by reactivating its participation in the CONSER project. NAL has also been accepted by the Library of Congress as a participant in the Name Authorities Co-op (NACO) project to build a national name authority file. NAL will initially contribute name headings for agricultural serials cataloged by NAL.

The CONSER project, which began in 1975, is a cooperative effort by the library community to create, maintain, and distribute a machine-readable data base of quality bibliographic and cataloging information for serials that conforms to national standards. NAL has approximately 12,000 retrospective serial records not available in any nationally shared cataloging system. NAL expects to have these records upgraded and input into the CONSER data base.

Microfilm Acquisitions Reveal Elements of Popular Culture

From 1907 to 1916, the Russian national bibliography *Knizhnoia lietopis'* contained many entries for small, cheap publications in series such as *Nat Pinkerton, korol' syshchchikov* [Nat Pinkerton: King of the Detectives] and *Nik Karter* [Nick Carter], which were translations from American pulp literature of the time. These little works won quick acceptance in Russia, particularly among young people who wanted books of highly spiced adventure. Quite soon, parents, teachers, and literary critics began to worry about the possible effect these might have on the mind of Russian youth. Two major pedagogical journals, *Viestnik vospitaniia* [Herald of Education] and *Pedagogicheskii sbornik* [Pedagogical Miscellany], published long, worried examinations of this type of literature in 1909, and there were additional indications of concern in other quarters. Not the least of these was the essay on Nat Pinkerton and on the effect of early motion picture comedies by Kornei Chukovskii (1882–1969) that appeared in 1910.

Soviet literary critic N. M. Zorkaia, in her *Na rubezhe stoletii: u istokov massovogo iskusstva v Rossii, 1900–1910 godov* [At the Turn of the Century: The Sources of Mass Art in Russia, 1900–1910 (Moscow, Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1976. pp. 139–140. PN1993.5.R9Z58)], indicates that even the Lenin State Library has only a small sample of works about Nat Pinkerton and similar American heroes. The Library of Congress, however, has recently received from the Lenin State Library a group of nine titles on microfilm, including examples of both the tales themselves and literary comment about them, but not including Chukovskii's essay, which is available in several forms in the Library's collections. Students of the international influence of American popular culture, as well as specialists working on some of the aspects of the outlook of Russia in the late Imperial era, will find these items of interest.

There were few Russian writers of the 19th century who had any direct knowledge of the United States, although many of them did have an acquaintance with American literature and outlook. In the index to the collected works of Tolstoi there are, for example, several hundred references to American writers and public figures, ranging from Thoreau to William Jennings Bryan, and there is even evidence to indicate that one of Pushkin's tales was influenced by a story by Washington Irving. Fëdor Dostoevski, after he returned from Siberian exile and while he was still formally prohibited from being an editor, was the real director of two journals, *Vremia* and *Epokha,* of which his brother was listed on the masthead as editor, and it is presumed that the journals' remarks on Nathaniel Hawthorne and the decision to run a rather long article on the Mormons were actually his responsibility.

None of these men or other writers of the first rank, however, came to see the United States themselves. The only Russian literary figure of even the remotest consequence who seems actually to have lived in America for any time was the now quite forgotten Grigorii Aleksandrovich Machtet (1852–1901). As a young man, scarcely 20 years of age, he came to the United States where, for a time, he lived in an agricultural commune in Kansas that had been founded by a Russian exile. He began literary activity, publishing verse in the journal *Svoboda,* issued in San Francisco, the first Russian-language serial in the United States.

After about two years he returned to Russia, writing a number of sketches of his experiences that appeared in the journal, *Nedielia.* In 1876, he was exiled because of his political activities, and it was not until 1884 that he was free, although he continued to be under surveillance for the rest of his life. He wrote many tales and novels, often drawing upon his time in America,

and his works were evidently popular. As the major pre-1917 Russian encyclopedia said of him, "He writes with great pathos and draws his scenes quite schematically: a villain is a villain from head to foot, and a good man is an angel. Among young readers and those who do not look at literature solely from the artistic side, it is precisely Machtet's directness that arouses sympathy." Some of his stories of Russian life were translated into other languages where, according to the same encyclopedia, readers did not realize his tendencies toward an overdramatization of Russian reality. Among his verse was a revolutionary song that was among V. I. Lenin's favorites.

There were two editions of Machtet's collected works following his death. Neither, however, has been reported to be available in the United States, although a few libraries report separate works of his, until the Library recently received the microfilm of the 10-volume edition of 1911–13. This acquisition will be of interest not only for Machtet's writings about America, but also for students of aspects of Russian popular culture of the last century, as an example of the brightly colored and essentially unsubtle forms of literature that attracted the mass reader. It was probably just such tendencies that also contributed to the popularity in Russia at that time and later of comparable works by such writers on American scenes as Bret Harte and Mayne Reid.

Microfilm of both these acquisitions is being processed for addition to the Library's collections.

[*Robert V. Allen*]

Library of Congress Publications

New Publication

Who Knows?—Selected Information Resources on Solar Energy. (SL 83-5) August 1983. (43 p.) Compiled by John A. Feulner of the National Referral Center, this is a descriptive listing that gives the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and other particulars about 68 organizations that are willing to answer questions or provide information on the title topic. Among the particulars given for each organization are its areas of interest, holdings or data files, publications, and information capabilities and services. The material is arranged under the following categories: Federal Government; societies, associations, etc.; universities; and private/commercial organizations. There is an organization names index. Copies may be obtained free on request from the Library of Congress, National Referral Center, Washington, D.C. 20540, provided that requesters enclose a self-addressed mailing label.

Ongoing Publications

Name Authorities. (Cumulative microform edition) ISSN 0195-9093. The 1977–December 1982 cumulative microform edition, available on 48X, is for sale by the Cataloging Distribution Service, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20541, at a cost of $120 for the 1982 subscription year.

National Register of Microform Masters. ISSN 0090-3299. 1982 Annual Vol. 1, A-K (874 p.) Vol. 2, L-Z (904 p.) For sale by the Cataloging Distribution Service at a cost of $135 for the 1982 annual.

National Union Catalog: Books (Microfiche ed.) ISSN 0734-7650. September 1983. Published on diazo negative microfiche using a reduction ratio of 48X. This publication contains a full record register and four separate cumulative indexes: names, title, subject, and series, issued on a monthly basis. For sale by the Cataloging Distribution Service at $350 for the 1983 subscription year.

National Union Catalog: Cartographic Materials. (Microfiche ed.) ISSN 0734-7634. April–June 1983. This publication on diazo negative microfiche using a reduction ratio of 48X features a full record register and five separate cumulative indexes for name, title, subject, series, and geographic classification code. Subscriptions to the 1983 cumulative quarterlies are available for $105 from the Cataloging Distribution Service.

Subject Catalog. ISSN 0096-8803. 1982. Vol. 1, A-Art Museums (998 p.) Vol. 2, Art Nouveau-Buoys (1008 p.) Vol. 3, Buozzi-Cistercians (993 p.) Vol. 4, Citation-Dalhousie (998 p.) For sale by the Cataloging Distribution Service at a cost of $1,090 for the 1982 annual cumulation.

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